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RUEAHLCH/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000327

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STATE FOR PRM/A; DHS FOR BCIS HEADQUARTERS, OFFICE OF
ASYLUM, REFUGEES AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS; CAIRO FOR
REFCOORD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREF PHUM](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: REFUGEE ADMISSIONS REFERRAL: ZEYAD TARIQ KADHEM

REF: 2006 STATE 326248

[1](#)1. (SBU) Embassy Baghdad would like to refer the following locally employed staff from the Regional Embassy Office (REO) in Al-Hillah to the US refugee admissions program (USRAP). Below is biographic information of the principal applicant and dependents, a description of the persecution claim and his current economic means, and justification for recommending him for the USRAP.

[1](#)2. (SBU)

Principal applicant (PA):

NAME: Zeyad Tarik Kadhem
DOB: 25 July 1970
POB: Al Hillah, Iraq
Passport Number: S 0296302
Gender: Male
Marital Status: Married

Dependents:

NAME: Shaima Safa Al Khalaf
DOB: 7 February 1977
POB: Baghdad
Passport Number: S 2336398
Gender: Female
Relation to PA: Wife

NAME: Naba Zeyad Tariq
DOB: 15 June 2002
POB: Al Hillah, Iraq
Gender: Female
Relation to PA: Daughter

NAME: Meriam Zeyad Tariq
DOB: 25 September 2004
POB: No further Information
Gender: Female
Relation to PA: Daughter

[1](#)3. (SBU) Description of persecution claim, as presented by the PA himself: Zeyad was hired by the Al-Hillah REO in January of 2005. In early December of 2007, Zeyad 's cousin was taken by Jaysh Al-Mahdi (JAM) militias before a sharia court in a husseniya (Shia mosque) in Al-Hillah controlled by supporters of radical Shia cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr. Zeyad's cousin was told that Zeyad should turn himself in and appear before the court, or that they would go and get him. The JAM stated that they knew where he lived, and that he was badmouthing Muqtada Al-Sadr in public. They also stated that he should not be working for the US consulate (REO) as an interpreter for American VIPs. Additionally, an anonymous

caller phoned Zeyad to tell him to come before the same sharia court. On December 24, Zeyad's brother and his brother's father-in-law were kidnapped in Baghdad. After the family paid for the ransom, the kidnappers released the father-in-law, but killed Zeyad's brother. Zeyad believes his brother was killed, despite payment of the ransom, because they knew Zeyad worked for the REO. Zeyad thought about leaving the country then, but decided to stay for at least the forty days of mourning that religious tradition called for. In addition to his brother, a driver and a bodyguard were also killed. Of the USD 225,000 collected from family members to pay for the ransom, Zeyad contributed USD 20,000.

¶4. (SBU) Zeyad started working for Americans on April of 2003, when he volunteered to translate and assist US Marines with the 1st battalion, 4th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He was then hired as an interpreter for the battalion's psychological operations unit. Zeyad states that his work caused a group of former Iraqi military to threaten him. In September of 2003 he was hired by the Coalition Provisional Authority. Zeyad reports that one night in the winter of 2004, someone in a car opened fire against him while shouting "die you pig". Fortunately, the shooter missed and Zeyad was not harmed. Two months after this incident, Zeyad says that he received a written threat (left in his house) from an Islamic group stating that he should quit working for infidels or they would kill him and his family. As the security situation deteriorated, Zeyad's life has become more difficult. He limits all his movements and avoids social contacts with friends and acquaintances, particularly since the assassination of his brother.

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¶5. (SBU) Refcoord has spoken with Zeyad and with American Foreign Service Officers in Al-Hillah who are aware of his situation and support his referral to the USRAP. Zeyad has also presented recommendation letters from Marines who are his former supervisors praising his service and dedication and acknowledging that Zeyad has received threats as a result of his association with the USG.

¶6. (SBU) Zeyad is getting ready to depart for Egypt with his wife and daughter. He explained to the Refcoord that, after paying the USD 20,000 to try to get his brother released, he can not afford to go Jordan or Syria (Note: Many Iraqis consider Cairo as more affordable than Amman or Damascus. End note). Zeyad said he may only be able to put together USD 10,000 to pay for his trip and his and his family's expenses in Cairo. Zeyad is in the process of obtaining Egyptian visas and has indicated to a REO management officer that he may leave Iraq in about four weeks. Depending on the price of the plane tickets, it is likely that Zeyad will need economic assistance once he is in Cairo.

¶7. (SBU) JUSTIFICATION FOR RESETTLEMENT: Embassy Baghdad and REO Al-Hillah believe that Zeyad is under threat on account of his employment with the US government. Zeyad has spoken with the police chief of Al-Hillah, who has expressed sympathy for his situation but has openly admitted not to be in a position to protect him.
SPECKHARD